

POWER PLAYS: DELEGATED, SHARED, RESERVED

Mr. Jenkins

History 9

“Advising Framers of the Constitution”

Objectives:

- Explain the terms delegated, reserved, and shared powers and give examples of such powers in the Constitution.
- Use an analogy to explain the thinking of the framers in dividing powers between the federal and state governments.
- Apply the concept of delegated, shared, and reserved powers to a present-day issue.

Preparation:

- Review the basic story of “Frankenstein” by Mary Wollstonecraft Shelly; one may use the Internet to find book reviews.
- Review the Federalist Papers volume 1, 2, and 51 to determine the sentiments of the people.

Activity:

- Working in pairs, discuss and complete the three questions on the left side of the activity sheet. You are to advise Dr. Frankenstein on creating a living being who will serve him without turning into a monster.
- Following class discussions, complete the following three questions:
 - How were the answers of various pairs alike and different?
 - What kinds of controls were suggested to keep the creation from turning into an uncontrollable monster? Would the controls suggested be sufficient? Would you feel safe with such a being in your neighborhood?
 - Would it be possible to come to a consensus among all class members about the best answers to each question?

Give reasons for your responses.

Activity:

- The Constitution distinguishes three kinds of power: delegated, reserved and shared. Delegated powers are those given specifically to the federal government. Included are the powers to declare war, control international and interstate commerce, coin money, and conduct foreign relations. Reserved powers are powers the states keep for themselves. They include the power to regulate public health and morals, control intrastate trade, and ratify amendments to the Constitution. Shared powers are those that both the state and federal governments exercise. These include the power to tax, borrow money, and establish court systems.

Consider both the above information and the class responses to the Frankenstein monster questions to answer the questions on the right side of the activity sheet.

FOCUS on one of the central issues of the Constitutional Convention – how to create a national government that would be powerful enough to meet the needs of all the people but not so powerful that it would overwhelm state governments.

Class Discussion:

- Which powers assigned to the monster could be identified as delegated, shared, and reserved?
- Of the powers assigned by the Constitution, which are delegated, shared, and reserved?
- Would your assignment of powers ensure the kind of creation Dr. Frankenstein wanted?
- How did the framers' assignment of powers affect the state and federal governments?

Assignment:

- Write an editorial on whether the federal government should withhold educational funds from states that fail to provide equal opportunities for all students within the school system. In your editorial show that the issue is an example of conflict between federal and state powers, take a position on whether the federal government should withhold funds, support your position with at least three arguments, and distribute a plan of action for states to follow in complying with or defying the federal law.

Evaluation:

- Participation in pair discussions: equal contribution, attentiveness to the task, and arriving at supportable decisions.
- Editorials have clarity in describing the issue of federal versus state powers, persuasiveness in stating and supporting reasons for or against federal involvement, and specificity in describing a logical course of action for states to take.